

County OWF Hardship Reason Codes for: "[WAYNE](#)"

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State Reason

Cat. Code Description

01	01	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS 60 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER.
03	01	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS PROVIDING CARE FOR A DISABLED FAMILY MEMBER AND OTHER REASONABLE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISABLED MEMBER'S CARE ARE NOT AVAILABLE OR ARE INADEQUATE.
03	02	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS A SINGLE CUSTODIAL PARENT CARING FOR A CHILD WHO IS NOT YET 6 YEARS OF AGE AND APPROPRIATE CHILD CARE (PER OAC 5101:1-3-12) HAS NOT BEEN AVAILABLE.
04	01	PARENT/CARETAKER HAS A SERIOUS PHYSICAL OR MENTAL CONDITION RENDERING HIM OR HER INCAPACITATED FOR EMPLOYMENT. INCAPACITY MUST BE VERIFIED BY A PHYSICIAN OR PSYCHOLOGIST ON A COMPLETED BASIC MEDICAL FORM (ODHS 7302) AND/OR MENTAL FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT FORM (ODHS 7308)
04	02	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS ACTIVELY PURSUING SSI OR SSD ELIGIBILITY WHEN THE 36 MONTH TIME LIMIT IS REACHED AND THE CDJFS CONSIDERS THIS A VIABLE SSI OR SSD ELIGIBILITY CLAIM, AND THE SSI OR SSD CLAIM HAS NOT BEEN DENIED.
05	01	A PARENT OR CARETAKER WHOSE CAPACITY TO RETAIN EMPLOYMENT IS BEING DISRUPTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AS EVIDENCED BY RESIDENCE IN A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER, A CURRENT PROTECTIVE COURT ORDER, A POLICE REPORT, OR A SWORN AFFIDAVIT.
06	01	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS ENROLLED IN AN EDUCATION OR TRAINING PROGRAM DIRECTLY RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT, WHICH WILL NOT BE COMPLETED BY THE EXPIRATION OF THE 36 MONTH LIMIT, BUT GRADUATION AND EMPLOYMENT ARE ANTICIPATED WITHIN 6 MONTHS
07	01	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER FACES SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT DUE TO MULTIPLE FELONY CONVICTIONS
08	01	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER FACES SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT DUE TO HOMELESSNESS.
09	01	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS EXPERIENCING EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES OR RECENT CATASTROPHE AS DETERMINED BY A PANEL APPOINTED BY THE AGENCY DIRECTOR.
10	01	ADULT CARETAKER WHO IS MEDICALLY VERIFIED TO BE 6 OR MORE MONTHS PREGNANT AND IS MEDICALLY VERIFIED TO BE UNABLE TO WORK.
15	01	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS NOT EMPLOYED, AND HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A FEDERALLY ALLOWABLE WORK ACTIVITY FOR AT LEAST A PERIOD OF 12 MONTHS OUT OF THE LAST 36 MONTHS.
15	02	THE PARENT OR CARETAKER IS UNEMPLOYED DUE TO LACK OF WORK OR BUSINESS CLOSING AND THE COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IS 2X THE STATE RATE.

Wayne County Hardship Criteria

Ohio law limits participation in Ohio Works First (OWF) cash assistance to 36 months. Wayne County may exempt up to 20% of its average monthly number of OWF participants from the 36-month limit due to “hardship.”

The Wayne County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) at its sole discretion will extend the benefits only if the assistance group member(s) have satisfactorily complied with his/her self-sufficiency contract or have not failed without good cause for the last twelve (12) months of assistance, meet OWF cash eligibility requirements, and are able to verify that at least one of the criteria from the priority list below is met.

In assistance groups with two adults both must meet at least one of the criteria for the assistance group to qualify for a hardship extension.

Once accepted as a hardship extension, failure to comply with the self-sufficiency contract established between the participant and the Agency will result in the loss of the hardship extension and termination of cash assistance. Once the hardship extension is lost or removed, hardship cannot be re-instated.

PRIORITY 1

- 1) The parent or caretaker in an assistance group is unable to work due to a physical or mental illness or condition, which renders him/her, incapacitated for employment. The incapacity must be verified by a licensed physician and/ or psychologist on a completed Basic Medical Form (ODHS 7302) and/or Mental Functional Capacity Assessment Form (ODHS 7308) with a vocational assessment. The affected individual must cooperate with all aspects of the self-sufficiency contract which may include applying for SSI/SSD benefits. The WCDJFS reserves the right to secure and rely upon a second opinion, further testing, or evaluation by a physician, psychologist, testing facility, or laboratory of the county’s choice. The period of incapacity must be at least 30 days. Such an assistance group may receive a maximum extension of up to twelve (12) months, with a mandatory six (6) month status review.
- 2) The parent or caretaker has an application for Supplemental Security Income or Social Security Disability that must be pending when the 36-month time limit is reached, and must have been filed with the Social Security Administration at least 6 months before the 36 month limit is reached and the WCDJFS considers this a viable SSI or SSD eligibility claim. The assistance group must have cooperated with CMS application procedures. Such an assistance group may receive a maximum extension of up to twelve (12) months, with a mandatory 6 month status review. If denied by CMS, SSI, or SSD the hardship extension of benefits is denied or terminated.
- 3) The assistance group member can provide verification of domestic violence which would result in hardship to member(s) of the household, and which would make it difficult or dangerous for the parent or caretaker to work, and the perpetrator of the domestic violence is not a member of the household. Verification may consist of one or more of the following: a police report, an active civil protection order, residence at a domestic violence shelter, pending criminal domestic violence charges against the perpetrator, a criminal conviction of the perpetrator for domestic violence against a member of the assistance group, a sworn affidavit by the victim of domestic violence, or

retention of an attorney coupled with cooperative steps to resolve the situation. This extension criteria shall cease to apply if the perpetrator of domestic violence becomes a member of the assistance group or a member of the household.

4) The parent or caretaker is providing care for a disabled family member and other reasonable arrangements for the disabled member's care are not available or are inadequate. The medical necessity of the individual's presence to provide care for the family member must be verified by a physician's statement. WCDJFS reserves the right to secure and rely upon a second opinion from a medical provider of its choice. Such an assistance group may receive a maximum extension of up to six (6) months).

5) The parent or caretaker is 60 years of age or older. The parent or caretaker must be assigned to and fulfilling his/her work activity requirements.

PRIORITY 2

6) The parent or caretaker is enrolled in an education or training program directly related to employment, which will not be completed by the expiration of the 36 month limit, but graduation and employment are anticipated within 6 months. Such an assistance group may receive an extension of up to six (6) months or until the training program is completed, whichever is shorter.

7) A pregnant woman who is at least 6 months pregnant, AND provides a doctor's statement that she is unable to work will be granted a maximum of 5 months hardship **for one pregnancy once in a lifetime.** The hardship exemption will end the month after the birth.

8) The parent or caretaker is a single custodial parent, caring for a child who is not yet 6 years old, loses access to childcare due to circumstances beyond the household's control and the lack of childcare prevents the parent or caretaker from pursuing, obtaining, and/or maintaining employment. The Assistance Group must provide documentation from at least five (5) recognized childcare providers indicating that childcare assistance was applied for and unavailable. Such an Assistance Group may receive an extension up to a maximum of three (3) months, or until suitable childcare is found, whichever is shorter.

PRIORITY 3

9) The parent or caretaker is not employed when the 36 months time limit is reached, and has not been given an opportunity to participate in a federally allowable work activity for at least a period of 12 months out of the 36 months of OWF assistance. The adult caretaker must be performing assignments listed on the self-sufficiency contract. Such an assistance group may receive an extension of up to a maximum of six (6) months.

10) The parent or caretaker is unemployed due to lack of work or business closing, is unable to find employment, **and** the unemployment rate for Wayne County, as reported by ODJFS, is continuously at a rate greater than twice (2X) the Ohio Statewide average for at least three (3) months prior to the month in which the Assistance Group has applied. Such an Assistance Group may receive an extension up to a maximum of six (6)

months or until such time as the Wayne County unemployment rate is less than twice (2X) the Ohio Statewide average, whichever is shorter.

11) The parent or caretaker is not employed and is unable to obtain employment because of multiple felony convictions but is pursuing a course of action that will result in employment within six months. Maximum extension period is six (6) months with mandatory three (3) month status review.

12) The parent or caretaker has significant barriers to employment due to homelessness. The individual must be actively cooperating with other community agencies which provide case management services to secure permanent housing. Maximum extension period is three (3) months.

13) The parent or caretaker is experiencing extraordinary circumstances or recent catastrophe whereby the imposition of the time limits would prevent the parent or caretaker of the child(ren) from completing the activities needed to reach a level of economic self-support. A review panel appointed by the director of CDJFS will determine if these circumstances make the participant eligible. Maximum extension period is three (3) months.

An assistance group which exhausts its initial extension and which meets the criteria for a “*different*” hardship extension may re-apply for an extension. Such requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In no case may an assistance group receive a hardship extension for more than 24 months, lifetime. Extensions are not automatic.

If and when the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services notifies the WCDJFS that exceeding the 20% tolerance is imminent, continued assistance will be given in a priority ranking according to those who qualify for the hardship criteria listed in order in this policy, with the last criteria listed receiving the lowest priority.